



## Mind Games

*Stephanie Black*

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Psychologist Natalie Marsh's dream is now reality: her mental health services clinic has opened and is housed in an elegant, newly renovated nineteenth-century building. Unfortunately, not everyone is happy with the clinic's presence, including Heather Osbourne, a troubled young woman who wholly objects to the occupation of the building. Heather has spent years wandering the halls of the abandoned structure, convinced she's communing with her ancestor's ghost. When Natalie thwarts Heather's attempt to leap from a window, the shaken psychologist soon realizes Heather's failed jump is merely one piece of a disturbing puzzle. Greed and deceit are weaving a web around Natalie, and someone will stop at nothing—not even murder—to get what they want. Stretched to her breaking point, Natalie struggles to learn the truth, but only one thing is clear: nothing is as it seems.

## Mind Games Details

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Author : Stephanie Black

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# From Reader Review Mind Games for online ebook

## Katie W says

(4.5 Stars) Black does a great job of building a thrilling story full of suspense and tense moments. There are so many twists and turns and at times, I was left reeling. Some moments were a little confusing to me because it took me a minute to straighten out the characters and their roles in the book, but once I got a grip on them, I was in it hook, line, and sinker.

Dr. Natalie Marsh was the main character in Black's previous story, but these don't necessarily need to be read in order. Can I just say if I was Natalie, I'd be looking for another line of work and maybe a move out of the country? I honestly don't know how much stress and drama one person can take. I'd be scared of my own shadow by this point, if I were her. Natalie is written in a way that makes her very realistic and easy to relate to--yes, she's a psychologist, but she's "normal."

There are so many crazy and creepy situation and they all seem to be threaded together with almost eerie, paranormal tendrils that left me feeling a few goosebumps. I can always count on this author to deliver a novel full of surprises that leaves me flipping pages as fast as I can.

Content: very mild romance; mild+ violence (murders, death, attempted suicide, etc--nothing graphic)

\*I received a copy through the publisher, which did not affect my opinion in any way.\*

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## Rachel DeVaughn says

This story was fast paced, thrilling but a little confusing at times. Natalie is a psychologist and is excited to open her own mental health clinic to help others but things aren't going as she had planned. She tries to work with her friend Gideon to figure out why Heather is "haunting" her new clinic and why someone doesn't want her to be successful.

"Mind Games" was well written and had a lot of twists and turns that I enjoyed. The story obviously dealt with serious concerns like mental health and mental illness. I would classify "Mind Games" as a thrilling suspense book.

I received a copy of this book complimentary for blog and social media review. All opinions are my own.

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## Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

\*\*\*4.5 stars\*\*\*

It took me a while to find the time to sit down and read this book. I started it once, set it aside, and then started it at a later date.

At first, I was a little confused, trying to sort out the different characters. The reader is quickly introduced to about 90% of them in the first few pages. The book opens at a party celebrating the opening of new building. One of the offices is a Psychiatric office. There are some who are opposed to it being in the building. It

seemed like a lot of information was presented in a short period of time.

Fortunately, my confusion didn't last long and I was able to dig into the story. I am very glad that I did. The book is definitely about "mind games". The question is who is controlling the games? There are many suspects who have a motive. There are two murders, one is known from the start who did it, but there is a second murder that is tied to the first. Stephanie Black does an amazing job at casting doubt on the characters, but not letting the reader know until the very end who the villain is.

If it wasn't for the start, this would have been a 5 star book for me. I enjoyed it! There is non-graphic violence, and mild kissing.

Source: I received a complimentary copy of the book from the publisher. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

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### **Kris Graff says**

I have been wanting to read Stephanie Black's books for a while and I got the chance with Mind Games. Mystery/Suspense is one of my favorite genres and I love trying to guess "who done it". I thoroughly enjoyed Mind Games. Just when I thought I had it figured out near the end, a great twist came out of nowhere. The characters were wonderfully developed, I found myself getting frustrated and slightly agitated right along with the Natalie, the main character. I enjoyed reading Mind Games and I plan on getting the rest of Black's books and diving right in.

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### **Hope M says**

The book Mind Games by Stephanie Black is about a therapist who runs a clinic and finds out a girl is trying to haunt the building along with her dead great great great grandmother. On the night of Natalie Marsh's clinic opening, a girl named Heather tries to jump out the top story window. Luckily Stuart that works with Natalie was able to stop her. She wanted to join her grandma to help her "haunt" the building. Gideon, Natalie's boyfriend, was at Stuart and Ainsley's house when a surprise from their boss arrived. Stuart got a brand new truck but somehow Heather appeared. She warned them to stay away and then she vanished. Drew is Stuart's cousin and he was staying at Stuart's house when he was attacked by a man in black. He broke his leg but they never found the intruder. Natalie wants to help solve the mystery.

I think Mind Games is a great book and it was worth the time reading it. At the beginning it was a little slow and it was hard for me to get into it but after a couple chapters it got really interesting and I couldn't stop reading it. There were some parts that didn't make sense. The workers all went to a party and nothing really happened so I don't think that was necessary. I loved the author's perspective because it was third person so you knew what the main character was thinking but you also knew what other characters were thinking and what they wanted to do. Kenton, Heather's older brother, struggled with Heather being insane. He wanted to help but he didn't know what to do. All of us get into that situation sometimes when you want to help but there is nothing to do. The character Natalie was a very strong character in the book. She was bold and worked for what she wanted. She wanted to open up a clinic to help people and that is what she did eventually. She worked hard and throughout the book she was determined and brave. This book made me feel happy, scared, interested and excited for the ending. I loved this book and it was definitely worth the time.

reading.

Everyone needs help, and everyone can help. I think that goes along with Mind Games really well because that is what the whole book is about. Kenton wanted to help Heather, Natalie, and the other workers. He tried a lot but something's he just couldn't do. Natalie worked hard to figure out Heather's craziness and she tried everything. They all helped each other throughout the book and I think in a lot of books there are characters helping each other. This book was a wonderful example of helping and Natalie showed that.

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### **Cathy says**

Stephanie Black really is a master at the mystery/suspense category. Each and every one of her books is full of amazing suspense. Reading this one made me almost a little wary to go out, what if I came back to a dead body. Then I reminded myself that this is only fiction...I'm not going to find a dead body!

I really like the way Stephanie Black writes these. In this one, you see the story from multiple viewpoints. Natalie, Gideon, Ainsley. But even seeing it from so many perspectives, I had no idea who could have been after Natalie. That's part of what made it so fun!

I love the characters. Natalie is really amazing, she's been through so much already between her mom and her sister. Now she just wants to help people who can't help themselves. She's a psychologist and she's just opened her new mental health clinic. But she opened it in a beautifully renovated building that's popular with all kinds of other businesses and they want nothing to do with her business being there. I love that she's not willing to give up her dream to bow to the other people's wishes. But things keep getting crazier and crazier and all of the evidence seems to point to Natalie, that she's the one who is killing and causing problems for everyone. Even with all of this, Natalie keeps trying to go on doing what makes her happy, helping others.

The other characters are great too. I really liked Gideon. I liked the way he goes out of his way to help Natalie with everything. He feels so concerned when he can't figure out just who is causing the problems either.

This one had tons going on in the plot. There's the main conflict of the Natalie and her clinic. But there's also Ainsley and Stuart and the problems they make for themselves. I loved the way it kind of all tied in in the end. And the main bad guy was such a surprise for me at the end. There's no way I would have ever guessed just who it was. This was such a great one! I loved the amount of suspense, and it really made me not want to put it down until I got to the very end!

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### **Kathleen (Kat) Smith says**

Nefesh Bria.

Hebrew for healthy soul.

When Nefesh Bria opens it's door in 18th century renovated building. Some of the tenants are less than thrilled to learn that a mental health clinic is opening its doors on the first floor. Along with a travel agency

and art gallery, how does one deal with the potential crazy people that will be walking around within the facility. Some of them may stop at nothing to ensure that this business finds a new place to set up shop.

When Psychologist Natalie Marsh gets drawn into chasing down a young distraught woman, Heather Osbourne, who believes she is following the advice of her great-great-great grandmother who died accidentally when she fell from the properties 4th floor window. She believes if they can exist in the same realm, she might be better off. Thankfully, her suicide attempt is faulted by Natalie and her friends Stewart and Ainsley. Hoping she will get the help she needs, they work on creating positive impressions of their facility within the community.

Wealthy entrepreneur Robert Chapman loves a bit of adventure and has hired Stewart's cousin Drew to take him trekking on the John Muir Trail, but Ainsley and Stewart are tired of his boasting how wonderful all the perks and bonuses are of being asked to be the "trekmaster." They believe if Stewart could have those opportunities instead, they might just get out of the financial hole they believe themselves to be in. Ainsley convinces Stewart to get Drew drunk and with the recent string of burglaries in their apartment complex, they can stage an attack that will leave Drew unable to attend. While the initial attack is successful in breaking his leg, the complications from the event, now lead to Drew's death. Without figuring out a plan, they know it will be a matter of time before the police connect them to the crime. They need to find someone crazy enough to do this and they think they have found just the right scapegoat to take the fall.

I received *Mind Games* by Stephanie Black compliments of Covenant Communications. This is a great novel that takes a bit of time to ramp up and the reader it engaged. About the first 1/4 of the novel is spent introducing a lot of characters and setting the stage, but once that is out of the way, the story line begins to unfold and keep the reader wanting to finish the novel. This is a great novel that creates those moments of suspense where you think you might just have it all figured out, only to leave you second guessing your answers. Truly an exceptional novel once you get the beginning out of the way, hold on and I promise it will be worth the wait. I would give this one a 4.5 out of 5 stars.

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### **Amberly Lucas says**

I loved this book!! I read it in two days!! Stephanie is such a great author and knows how to pull you into the story so that you have to keep reading to find out what happens! I love Natalie and Gideon and how they try to be there and support each other even though they're not sure where they stand with each other. I would highly recommend this book to those who love mystery and suspense!!

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### **Heather Chapman says**

This isn't my normal genre that I reach for at the library, but I absolutely LOVED it. I am now a Stephanie Black fan, and I need to pick up her other books!

The story was wonderful for so many reasons-- from the many different subplots that weaved together, the interesting characters, the overarching themes (We're all a little mental, right?), to the pacing and writing.

I couldn't put this book down, and I seemed to make a new hypothesis at the end of each chapter! Loved it!

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## Laurel Stark says

I just finished "Mind Games" and had to come and review it immediately. What a GREAT book! I read many, many books and have been disappointed in a few of my recent reads, so I'm very happy to have found such a riveting book written by a fantastic (and prolific) author.

I'll try not to give anything away, so I'll be careful how I phrase my favorite things about this book.

Firstly, the main character, Dr. Natalie Marsh, is level-headed and intelligent, but also very human and filled with normal fears and doubts. I love that even though she stays poised on the outside during stressful situations, her thoughts on the inside mirror my own. Stephanie Black did a wonderful job creating solid reasons for Natalie to get into uncomfortable or unwanted situations, nothing felt forced or contrived. That is talent. I also loved seeing how the stress started impacting Natalie's actions as the story progressed. It showed that nobody is immune to such traumatic events and that being impacted by them is normal.

I absolutely loved the different conflicts and how they all tied in together at the end. Stephanie Black is skilled at introducing many characters while making them unique and memorable. She kept the pace of the action just right, starting with a big incident, then introducing a bunch of small incidents that build and build until we come to the stunning climax and resolution. Even though I had a solid suspicion about "who-did-it", I didn't have a clue as to the motivation until the end...and then it all made sense! I loved it. Some books pull out a random "bad guy" at the end to shock readers, but doesn't make it tie into the events throughout the story in a satisfying way. This had an excellent reveal that actually made sense, but one I couldn't predict myself. Yay!

I also loved the reference to Macbeth (since that's my favorite Shakespeare play, I saw parallels immediately)...but I won't say any more about that. ;)

The way Natalie Marsh fought stereotypes about the mentally ill throughout the book was so refreshing and made her a different kind of hero in my eyes. It's great to be rooting for a protagonist who is also genuinely a kind, clear-headed, intelligent woman who isn't afraid to stick up for others. The relationship between Natalie and Gideon was also lovely to see unfold and evolve. Gideon is such a fun character. Finally- a romantic interest who I actually could see myself falling for, too! I loved his wit and sense of humor.

All in all, this was a quick, eventful, extremely enjoyable read. I love when characters are so well-written that I want to pull them out of the book and hug them/hit them/hang out with them. Especially Baxter. Goodness, I wanted to hit him a few times. Then...I felt bad for having that impulse. All I can say is..well done!!

This was my first Stephanie Black book, but it definitely won't be my last! Check it out. You won't regret it.

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## Mara says

Wow! I didn't know that a place could have so many mentally disturbed people in such a small area. Half of the people in this book have serious issues. Psychologist Natalie Marsh's dream has finally become a reality-

-she has her own clinic, Nefesh Bria (healthy soul in Hebrew), in a beautiful building, but things aren't coming up all roses. I think it's safe to say when someone attempts to commit suicide by jumping from a 4th floor window onto the courtyard below that's filled with guests who are there for the opening gala, it's a bad sign.

Heather Osborne has always objected to the construction of the Stoker Building since she "feels" her great-great-great-grandmother's presence there. Some of the other tenants of the building (namely Baxter Quincy and Victoria Parisi) aren't thrilled to have a mental health clinic there either and are quite vocal about it.

Robert Chapman, the owner of the Stoker Building, asks Natalie to be a liaison with Heather's brother so he can let them know if she's up to something that will cause problems for the Stoker Building and its business tenants. This is one request Natalie should've turned down because it only brings her a world of trouble.

Heather's brother is Kenton Lowery, a former patient of Natalie's, which she can't tell anyone because of therapist/patient confidentiality, so when untrue rumors start she can't clarify their "relationship", she can only deny the rumors. Strange things start happening such as reports of "mentally disturbed patients" harassing people coming in and out of the building, which fuels Baxter Quincy's case to get Nefesh Bria out of the building.

There are so many things going on at in this book, I couldn't figure out who was the thief and who was the killer or were they the same person? I didn't figure out who the killer was, and until the big reveal explained it all I had pinned one of the murders on someone else. Stephanie Black did a great job of keeping me on the edge of my seat.

Gideon must really love Natalie to have stuck around while the madness descended upon them and dragged him into it with her. If I were Natalie I would seriously consider moving across the country where no one knew me and open up a new clinic. There are a lot of characters in this book, so if you have trouble remembering names you might want to make a cheat sheet to keep them straight. I'm glad I don't live in Ohneka, there are too many crazy people there.

I received a copy of the book from the author (by my request) for an honest review, this did not influence my feelings about the book.

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## **Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says**

This is a book I have rules about. Number one: don't read at night. Number two: don't read when you are alone. Both of which I had to do for this book in order to get it read in time for my review. I'm a wimp, no doubt about it and I really wish I would have kept to my rules. ?

This book started out slow for me. It took me a few chapters to get a grip on who the many characters were and what role they played. I'd have to stop and think- wait, who is this? I don't like having to do that. By the middle of the book the intensity ramped up and things started happening at a faster pace. I was thinking everyone was guilty, bad and lying! The ending is very climactic! (and it scared me)

Stephanie Black is so good at writing these suspense/thrillers. What a mind she has. I appreciate that she is able to write in this genre and keep it clean.

Content: violence, death, attempted suicide

- I received a copy of this book from the publisher. All opinions expressed are my own.

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## **Lucinda says**

If you thought Natalie Marsh's tale was over—you're wrong, like I was. Natalie is back (and so is Gideon, thank goodness), Bartholomew and Turner are back, and all the twisty, creepy problems that seem to flock to Natalie are back too.

If NOT A WORD was twisty, MIND GAMES is right up there with it. What happens when greed and envy take over common sense? You plan something to turn things in your favor. But then something goes wrong, and soon you find yourself making the wrong choices, and more mistakes that keep escalating. And what happens when someone is so twisted that they can't let go and manipulate everything and everyone with no regard for consequences?

Unfortunately, although not directly connected to Natalie, she finds herself involved in problems that keep getting worse, and put her life in danger.

At least, this time, Natalie and Gideon more than "assume" they like each other. ;)

A psychological thriller worth reading. Highly recommend.

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## **Mindy says**

Mind Games is another top notch thriller from this talented author. This pacing on this book is perfect. I stayed up WAY past my bedtime reading this book, I had to find out what happened! Stephanie does a great job of building a steady foundation of suspense. This book is heart-pounding. With every turn of the page, I would think, "No way that just happened!" I don't know how Stephanie does it, but I was left guessing until the end. When you sit down to read, make sure you have things taken care of, as you will not want to stop reading until you are done. This book reads really fast, with engaging characters and excitement on every page.

5 out of 5 stars. This author can always be counted on for a wonderfully wild ride!

I received a copy from the publisher, all views and opinions expressed are my own.

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## **Karlene Browning says**

Love, love, love! I love a really good twisty-turny suspense thriller where I can't figure out who the bad guy/gal is. MIND GAMES did not disappoint. There are a lot of characters in this book—and every single one of them (except the police) were suspect in my mind at some point in the story. I did finally decide that it was a particular person, and I was right—but there was a twist to it that I didn't see coming.

Plot: This is key for a book like this and it was great. Throughout the book, you're not quite sure where it's going—in a good way! There are all these tendrils sneaking out, and all of them are wrapped up in a completely satisfying way.

There is some mild language and kissing/sensuality, plus mention of substance abuse. There's also some violence—two people die, and others get beat up badly—but it's not blood and gore. I'd be fine with teens, 14 & up, reading this. I give it a full 5 STARS and it will be part of my permanent library.

Full review at: <http://bookgeekreviews.com/mind-games...>

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